

WB FEATURE PROGRAM OUTSTANDING

Canadians Spent 50c Less In '54

The average Canadian spent 50c less in 1954 for movies than in 1953, when the per capita figure was the highest on record, \$8.30, and there is no doubt that the 1955 figure will drop even more. During 1953 the average admission price went up to 50c

(Continued on Page 3)

Victoria, Toronto To Be Demolished

Shea's Victoria Theatre, Toronto, which has had a spotty existence since its career as a two-a-day vaudeville house ended in 1926, has been purchased from Famous Players by City Parking Limited, Toronto. It will be razed at the end of January to make

(Continued on Page 6)

Cinema Seating Shows Remarkable Growth

Despite the drop in admissions and receipts, Canada's movie accommodation keeps increasing. According to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, the 1,936 "Regular" theatres had a seating capacity of 984,907 compared with 1,906 houses classed similarly in 1953,

which had a capacity of 978,162. So that in 1954 there was a gain of 38 houses and 6,745 seats. "Regular Theatres" are those not classed as "Drive-in Theatres," "Community Enterprises" and "Halls Serviced by Itinerant Operators." There may be a few 16 mm. situations among the "Regular Theatres" but almost all were built

(Continued on Page 3)

Cast In 'Crashing Las Vegas'

Mary Castle has been signed by Allied Artists for the feminine lead in *Crashing Las Vegas*, next in the *Bowery Boys* series.

CALLS FOR BEST SELLERS, HIT PLAYS, TOP STARS

Warner Bros.' list of pictures due for release and in production or preparation is nothing short of sensational, according to industry veterans. On deck is *The Court-Martial of Billy Mitchell*, in CinemaScope and WarnerColor, which

Six Cents Of Average 50c Price Is Tax

The average admission price in Canada went up from 47c in 1953 to 50c in 1954. It is unlikely that it went any higher in 1955, in which the decline in business continued. The average admission price included amusement taxes, which reached 12 per cent of the average gross. So that the theatre averaged 44c and the provincial and municipal governments 6c. The table below includes taxes:

Newfoundland	43c
Prince Edward Island	46c
Nova Scotia	42c
New Brunswick	42c
Quebec	55c
Ontario	51c
Manitoba	42c
Saskatchewan	44c
Alberta	52c
British Columbia	50c
Yukon & Northwest Territories	72c

stars Gary Cooper and an outstanding cast directed by Otto Preminger. It is one of 21 features on which information was carried in the company's recent report to the shareholders, among which is one of film history's greatest spectacles, *Helen of Troy*, which was shot in Italy and stars Rossana Podesta as Helen.

Among the films in current release in Canada are *Illegal*, with Edward G. Robinson; *Rebel Without a Cause*, the much-talked-about film starring the late James Dean; *I Died a Thousand*

(Continued on Page 3)

Scott JARO Aide To Frank Vaughan

Assistant to Frank L. Vaughan, general manager of J. Arthur Rank Film Distributors (Canada) Limited, is Frank L. Scott. Vaughan, who became JARO film chief when Frank Fisher moved over to head Odeon theatre operations, promoted the Western in-

(Continued on Page 4)

Sutherland Circuit

George Jenner and Arthur Currie are now operators of the H. J. Sutherland circuit in Ontario, which is comprised of the Roxy, Clinton; the Capitol and Park, Goderich; the Plaza, Mitchell; the Regent, Seaforth; and the Lyric, St. Mary's.

DONALD SUTHERLAND, 73, PASSES

One of Canada's leading motion picture pioneers, Donald Sutherland of Vancouver, died in that city last month at the age of 73. Born in Scotland, he opened his first movie house in Winnipeg in 1906. In 1919 he came to Vancouver and opened his Dream Land Theatre in a rented hall.

In 1932 he built the Kingsway and in 1940 the Circle and Fraser theatres. In 1941 Odeon acquired his interests and he retired in 1945.

Among those surviving are his wife Gertrude, two sons, one daughter, two brothers, three sisters and eight grandchildren. One of his sons, Gerald A., is British Columbia District manager for Odeon.

The late Mr. Sutherland, who had been one of Winnipeg's best soccer players in his youth, was an active golfer.

Interment was in Ocean View Cemetery.

TO BUILD IN CHARLOTTETOWN

Loss of the 64-year-old Prince Edward Theatre in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, brought much regret locally, an editorial in *The Guardian* said. "Down through the years this theatre has been the major centre of entertainment and many magnificent productions have been staged within its walls, ranging from Grand Opera and Shakespearean presentations to minstrel shows and popular concerts of all kinds," the Maritime newspaper said.

The 1,050-seat theatre, destroyed by fire of unknown origin during the night, will be replaced with a new one, F. Gordon Spencer, president of the F. G. Spencer Company Limited, announced on his arrival in Charlottetown from the firm's headquarters in Saint John, N.B. The company also operates the Capitol, which is the remaining house in the city of 20,000.

Two Houses Open In Alberta, Nfld.

The Community League of Tofield, Alberta has opened its \$70,000 Community Centre containing a 300-seat theatre. It replaces the old Community hall and theatre recently destroyed by fire.

Harry Randell has opened his 300-seat house, the first in Twillingate, Newfoundland.

The F. G. Spencer circuit is preparing plans to rebuild its Prince Edward Theatre in Charlottetown, P.E.I. The 1,050-seat house was gutted in a fire on December 14, 1955.

THE LITTLE MAN
WITH THE BIG
TALENT . . . AS A
FILING-CLERK
IN THE FOREIGN
OFFICE WHO IS
MISTAKENLY
SENT TO THE
GENEVA
CONFERENCE . . .

(pronounced
Whiz-Dumb) →



HE'S A
TRIPLE
THREAT
to your
funnybone

and 3 times funnier!

NORMAN WISDOM

England's Funniest Man, Most
Beautiful Girls and Latest Song
Hits in a Riot of Fun!...

MAN OF THE MOMENT

LANA MORRIS

BELINDA LEE

JERRY DESMONDE



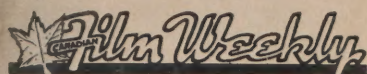
A J. ARTHUR RANK ORGANIZATION PRESENTATION



Another smash hit from

JARFED

J. ARTHUR RANK FILM DISTRIBUTORS (CANADA) LIMITED



Vol. 21, No. 1 January 4, 1956

HYE BOSSIN, Editor

Assistant Editor - - - - Ben Halter
Office Manager - - - - Esther Silver

CANADIAN FILM WEEKLY

175 Bloor St. East, Toronto 5, Canada

Authorized as Second Class Mail,
Post Office Department, Ottawa

Published by

Film Publications of Canada, Limited

175 Bloor St. East, Toronto 5, Ontario,
Canada — Phone WALnut 4-3707

Price \$3.00 per year.

SEATING GAIN

(Continued from Page 1)

exclusively for 35 mm. exhibition.

Information that bears on the gains: The DBS gave as 96 the number of new theatres opened in 1954, 13 as the number reopened and 77 as the number closed, the net gain being 32.

It should be noted that in 1954 the 1,936 "Regular" situations grossed \$97,012,140, a decline of \$3,877,221, for 218,503,653 admissions—22,679,073 fewer than in 1953. The total decline in admissions of all types of halls and theatres in 1954 compared with 1953 was 22,081,943. So that the brunt of the decline was borne by these theatres.

This brings us to the drive-ins and their place in the accommodation picture. They also contributed to the expansion of our patronage capacity by jumping from 174 in 1953 to 230 in 1954, a gain of 56, thus adding accommodation for 18,795 cars. The drive-ins, playing to 12,380,246 admissions, helped limit the general attendance decline by gaining 1,245,458 over the previous year.

For seat-tax purposes drive-ins are usually treated as two-and-a-half persons per car, so that about 50,000 seats were added to the 6,745 of the "Regular" theatres for a total gain of perhaps 56,000.

There is one puzzling aspect of the 6,745-seat gain for 32 "Regular" theatres. That's an average of 210 seats. There are very few 210-seat houses built, so perhaps the many houses altered in the last year added or dropped seats, affecting the figure.

If you have read this far, you are probably curious about the situation in 1955. DBS figures won't be available until late in 1956. But the accommodation gain will continue, even if business keeps declining, for Canadian Film Weekly figures show that in 1955 35 four-walled theatres and 19 drive-ins opened for business.

WB Buys Magazine Story

Warners has acquired the Readers' Digest story, *Two Wives*, as a starring vehicle for Jane Wyman.

WB Feature Program

(Continued from Page 1)

Times, with Jack Palance and Shelley Winters; *Blood Alley*, with John Wayne and Lauren Bacall; *Sincerely Yours*, starring Liberace; and *Target Zero*, with Richard Conte.

The Warners organization in Canada, headed by Haskell M. Masters, is providing the fullest exploitation support for all its pictures.

Here are some of the films to follow:

Miracle in the Rain, starring Jane Wyman, Van Johnson and Peggie Castle; *The Searchers*, in VistaVision and Technicolor, with John Wayne, Vera Miles, Jeffrey Hunter, Ward Bond and Natalie Wood; *The Animal World*, in Technicolor, written, produced and directed by Irwin Allen; *The Spirit of St. Louis*, in CinemaScope and WarnerColor, starring James Stewart; *The Lone Ranger*, in WarnerColor, starring Clayton Moore, Jay Silverheels, Lyle Bettger, Bonita Granville and Perry Lopez; *Moby Dick*, produced and directed in Technicolor by John Huston, with Gregory Peck, Richard Basehart, Leo Genn and Orson Welles; *Giant*, in WarnerColor and starring Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean, Jane Withers, Chill Wills and Mercedes McCambridge; and *Serenade*, in WarnerColor, starring Mario Lanza, Joan Fontaine, Sarita Montiel and Vincent Price.

Films now in production and preparation include:

The Old Man and the Sea, based on Ernest Hemingway's Pulitzer Prize novel, directed by Fred R. Zinneman and starring Spencer Tracy; *The Pajama Game*, from the hit Broadway musical; *The Bad Seed*, based on the successful Broadway play and starring Nancy Kelly; *Auntie Mame*, from the Patrick Dennis best-seller; *Tiger Tail Road*, a Tennessee Williams drama to be produced and directed by Elia Kazan; *Hell on Frisco Bay*, in CinemaScope and WarnerColor, starring Alan Ladd, Edward G. Robinson and Joanne Dru; *Toward the Unknown*, starring William Holden and Lloyd Nolan; and *Melville Goodwin, U.S.A.*, starring Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.

Also *The Violent Land*, a West-

Ruth Roman Cast In 'Rebel In The Town'

Ruth Roman has been signed by Aubrey Schenck, executive producer, to star with John Payne in *Rebel in the Town*, Bel-Air Productions' western drama which goes before the cameras January 6, for United Artists release.

ern starring Tab Hunter; *The Story of Mankind*, from the classic by Hendrik Willem Van Loon; *Goodbye, My Lady*, with Walter Brennan and Phil Harris; *The Lion's Share*, to be produced by Willis Goldbeck; *No Time for Sergeants*, from the Mac Hyman smash Broadway play; *Time Limit*, from the NY Theatre Guild's forthcoming stage production; *Marjorie Morningstar*, from the Herman Wouk best-seller; and *Band of Angels*, from the recently-acquired novel by Robert Pen Warren.

Also *A Face in the Crowd*, to be produced by Elia Kazan from the Budd Schulberg story; *The Wrong Man*, to be produced and directed by Alfred Hitchcock and to star Henry Fonda; *Santiago*, to have Alan Ladd and Rossana Podesta in the leads; *Burning Hills*, from the Saturday Evening Post story; *The Girl He Left Behind*, written by Marion Hargrove; *Two-Star General*, to be based on the best-seller by John P. Marquand and to star Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall; *The Ed Sullivan Story*, to star Ed Sullivan; and *Deep Six*, to star Alan Ladd.

SPENT 50c LESS

(Continued from Page 1)

from 47c, indicating the pressure of mounting costs, but it is unlikely that the 1954 average will be higher. The average seating capacity utilized fell from 29 per cent in 1953 to 27 per cent in 1954 and this direction continued into 1955.

Albertans spent the most on movies in 1954, averaging \$10.39 each compared with \$9.73 in 1953. Newfoundlanders spent the least, \$4.43 compared with \$4.03.

Per capita expenditure in British Columbia and the territories declined to \$10.13 last year from \$10.56; Ontario to \$8.85 from \$9.67; Quebec to \$6.04 from \$7; and New Brunswick to \$5.86 from \$7.02.

In Saskatchewan there was an increase to \$7.63 from \$7.07; Manitoba to \$7.81 from \$7.74; Nova Scotia to \$7.52 from \$7.35; and Prince Edward Island to \$4.82 from \$4.06.

In 1954 the number of all types of theatres and halls was down by 83 at 3,471 from the previous year, although the number of drive-in theatres increased to 230 from 174.

The decrease in receipts was due to a slump in paid admissions at regular theatres in 1954 to 218,508,653 from 241,182,726. Receipts at regular theatres were down to \$97,012,140 from \$100,889,361.



FOR MANY years ours was a business which could afford many frills and extraneous charges. Because of this we did not always fight hard enough



against all sorts of unreasonable attitudes, restrictions and taxes. This applied both to distributors and exhibitors. It was easier, and in some cases

cheaper, to submit rather than fight—and those who submitted were apt to again be victimized. Besides licences and seat taxes, motion picture theatres have almost constantly been plagued with amusement taxes under one name or another, and have not always been militant enough in their battle to whittle such taxes down or eliminate them entirely.

Distributors in this country have been faced with their own type of costly charges: for example, the duty on prints brought into the country and, more importantly, the bother and cost of having such prints censored. Ideas about what pictures should be shown to the public in different provinces vary widely among the different censorship boards, but they all seem to have developed one idea in common—to make a profit out of what was created primarily as a public service.

It would seem that a public service should be paid for out of public funds. On what basis, therefore, can some provinces justify the profits which are being made yearly by the departments they have set up for motion picture censorship and motion picture theatre control? Newspapers are not censored and would raise a terrible rumpus if such an idea was even suggested. Radio and TV are not censored and they too would not for a moment consider standing still long enough to be collared by the chain of censorship. Actually, we have today the paradox of it being possible to offer on TV some films which would not, or could not, pass the censorship boards of one or more provinces.

Our business should object to the principle of censorship in the same way as they have in the United States. Distributors should be supported in their objection to paying censorship fees arrived at by the desire on the part of a governing body to make a profit. In most cases censorship fees are based on a per-reel basis and short reels are not uncommon.

(Continued on Page 4)

That Herman B. Sure Gets Around

IF you don't know Herman Bernstein, you just haven't been around in this business—or you haven't been in it very long. Herman is that dark, stubby, smiling man who is beside the display of Boxoffice copies at every Canadian motion picture gathering—or he is on hand without the display. He's a real old-timer who began in the theatres but today handles Canadian sales for a number of USA magazines, among them *The Bottlers Gazette* and *Film World*.

Herman first found his way into the industry in 1912 as a candy boy for Harry Heller of the Palace, Montreal, who now operates the Majestic, Montreal. Then he went up the street to the Wonderland as an usher and after that to the Scala, later called the Rialto, which was operated by Mark Brock of Buffalo. While with Brock he met James T. Malone of All Features Limited.

Having been an all-round man with Brock, he was the same with Malone, acting as booker, salesman, etc. In 1916 two brothers operated the Bijou, Verdun and they hired Herman as manager. They went broke and left him to pay off the accounts. A little while of this and he enlisted in the Canadian Army, gave the Bijou back to the landlord, and went overseas.

On being mustered out he started the Variety Vaudeville Exchange and in 1926 married Rose Vallin and they are still happy. Their one child, Eddie, is now 23.

"I have done a tremendous amount of travelling in Canada and the United States," Herman says. "I have watched the industry grow to what it is today. If I had to go through that experience again, I would be glad to do it. I'm a poor showman but perhaps I wasn't meant to be a rich one."

He mentioned the names of some of the old friends he has known from coast to coast—Charlie Stephenson, Harry Kaufman, John Levitt, Harold Vance, Chick Wells, Arthur St. Germain. "It was a pleasure to know these old-timers those days and it's a pleasure to know them these days," Herman says. They feel the same way about him.

FOR SALE OR RENT

Capitol Theatre, Paris, Ont.

Newly renovated and
refurnished.

Apply

PREMIER OPERATING CORPORATION
72 Carlton St., Toronto

News Notes

FILM DAILY'S 'FAMOUS FIVES' POLL

Ernest Borgnine and Jennifer Jones took top honors for the best performances in 1955 by a male and female star in the "Film-Dom's Famous Fives" poll of USA critics and reviewers conducted annually by *The Film Daily*, NY trade publication. Borgnine's stint as Marty Pilette in UA's *Marty* and Miss Jones' work as Han Suyin in Fox' *Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing* won the approval of the voters.

Jack Lemmon, as Ensign Pulver in WB's *Mr. Roberts*, and Peggy Lee, as Rose Hopkins in WB's *Pete Kelly's Blues*, gained most votes as supporting performers. Tim Hovey and Natalie Wood were the best juveniles and "Find of the Year" was the late James Dean.

Marty also won its director, Delbert Mann, and its scripter, Paddy Chayefsky, most votes in their fields. Best photographed picture was the Japanese production from the Daiei studio, *Gate of Hell*.

740 RKO FEATURES FOR TV

USA and Canadian television rights for 740 features and 1,000 shorts, RKO's entire backlog, was sold to C & C Super Corporation last week for \$12,200,000 cash and an additional \$3,000,000 in two years. One of the principals is Mathew Fox. About 85 per cent of the films will be made in the next 90 days and the rest when they have been in theatre distribution for three years.

The deal also includes all 16 mm. rights and foreign theatre rights.

The films took 30 years to make at an estimated cost of \$750,000,000 and the production figure today would likely be about \$1,300,000,000. The deal, said Fox, will bring "an entire new era of home viewing."

C & C Super Corporation, headed by Walter Mack, former president of Pepsi-Cola, is a vast corporation. It manufactures canned soft drinks and rubber goods, and operates more than 100 restaurants. One of its subsidiary companies is Western Television.

NEW ANIMATION COMPANY OPENED

Allan Ackman, for three years animation director with the film division of Rapid Grip & Batten Limited, has left that company to open his own firm, Animation Productions, at 103 Rose Avenue in Toronto.

Ackman expects to have his perfected model of the Oxberry Animation Zoom Stand in operation within a month. He collaborated with John Oxberry, engineer for Animation Equipment Limited of New York, on the design for the original zoom stand while with Rapid Grip & Batten. Two of these stands are being used by UPA in Hollywood and the National Film Board has adapted part of the machine to its own use.

Ackman, a veteran of the RCAF in World War II, spent several years with the National Film Board in Ottawa, working with Norman McLaren on experimental animated techniques. He came to Toronto four years ago, joining Canadian Screen Publicity, then moved to RG&B.

ADVISES PATRONS ON SHOW FIRES

In a move to complement the work of theatre owners and managers in eliminating panic among patrons when a fire breaks out or some other emergency arises, D. E. Williams, chief inspector of the Theatres Branch of the Saskatchewan Fire Commissioner's Department, has issued a release through the Bureau of Publications which gives some sound, common-sense rules for the behavior of theatregoers. The release is available free to the public and a number of exhibitors have expressed the hope that Saskatchewan's lead will be followed by other provinces.

Williams stated that "a crowd of 700 people can be emptied from a theatre in about three minutes without rushing" provided all doors are used and people move away quickly once outside. He pointed out that most victims lose their lives through panic and said there should be at least two doors, at front and back, and both should be properly lighted and never locked.

He advised that rules against smoking should be strictly observed and that parents should visit theatres and halls first and instruct their children on exactly what to do in an emergency before allowing them to go alone. Above all, he cautioned, if anything does happen, walk to the nearest exit—don't run.

FRANK SCOTT

(Continued from Page 1)

dusty veteran, at the same time naming Reginald J. Doddridge his successor as Calgary branch manager.

Scott, in distribution for 25 years, was Monogram manager in Calgary when the Rank interests acquired the franchise and remained with JARO. His range of experience, which includes both 16 mm. and 35 mm. as well as various phases of distribution, such as promotion, makes him extremely valuable to head office.

He's married, has two children, is active in the Kiwanis and is a one-time lighthavy boxing champion of Western Canada.

Doddridge, past president of the Calgary Pioneers, started with Lewis J. Selznick's company, Select Pictures, in 1917 and joined JARO in 1947. He's one of the West's leading film industry figures and, like Scott, enjoys much personal popularity in the trade.

J. Arthur Rank Film Distributors (Canada) Limited, with at least 18 top pictures due for production and a backlog of fine product, is aiming at maintaining its steady climb in playing time. In addition the organization also handles Republic in Canada and the product of that company is handpicked for the best boxoffice reaction.

Vaughan said he was pleased at the rise to greater responsibilities by such able men, since it reflected progress. That progress would be maintained with continuing benefits to the theatre operator.

Columbia To Produce 'Lassie' Feature Film

Columbia Pictures will make a full-length feature picture, *Lassie*, in association with Robert Maxwell, producer of the TV series featuring the celebrated dog star. Maxwell will produce the film in CinemaScope and color, with Jan Clayton, who has been seen throughout the video series, heading the cast of the picture. The Columbia film will not borrow from the television series story line, but will be an entirely new script and will give Miss Clayton, musical comedy and recording star, an opportunity to sing.

OUR BUSINESS

(Continued from Page 3)

A start could be made on the reduction of fees by having a charge based on a per-foot basis, or preferably a flat minimum charge for a feature. This may be worth considering as a start towards reduction of the general cost of censorship, which is a factor in the cost of distribution.

Observanda



Typographs

FADING FANCIES: The attic. The new houses don't have them. Poking around a cellar storeroom isn't the same. Thought of that when I read Gerald Stevens' small book evaluating Canadiana of various kinds, *In a Canadian Attic*. Read it . . . *Where Science Fails*: We need something that can silence a telephone bell on this end while the sound of it ringing is carried on the other. Most people take the phone off the hook when they lie down or want to be out to phoners. But the phoners, getting a busy signal, go crazy trying to get the line. With no answer to ringing they'd hang up, go about their business, and try later . . . *Do you remember* when hat-check joints had a dime on the plate as a hint instead of a quarter? . . . *Jerk Insurance*: There are so many sneakouts in local nightclubs that waiters, who are stuck with the cheque whenever that happens, are forming a pool in their union to make up at least half the loss . . . *Anyone around* here with that French-made two-reeler in Eastman color of Marcel Marceau? I'd like to see it . . . *Overheard*: "It was a quiet party. Not one guest was carried out—horizontally" . . . *The most difficult* thing to find? Unbroken reading time.



THIS MAN HAD piles of bright, new pennies in his house, Walter Manley of Republic Pictures said, and a friend asked where they came from. "I make them myself," was the reply. The friend admired their genuine look and wanted to know how much they cost to make. "A cent and a half each," he was told. The friend scratched his head, then asked how you could show a profit that way. Answered the penny maker: "I falsify my books" . . . *Harry Boyle*, CBC exec, just sold his play, *The Gallant Greenhorn*, for semi-musical production by a group in which Jack Goldberg, who talked up interest in using the CNE as a studio about a decade ago, is a partner . . . *The overall title* of the sex-habit survey material gathered abroad by Kinsey could be called, a reader suggests, *Somewhere a Vice is Calling* . . . *Local scene* brightened by the presence of one of the Show Biz Kusells, this one Bud, who is production manager for Guthrie's NY-bound stage spectacular, *Tamburlaine*, a Stratford enterprise guided by Robert Whitehead . . . *Newell Rogers* of the London *Daily Mail* has Jim Cooper's desk in the *Globe and Mail* office and Jim now has the one Rog occupied in NY for *DM*. Jim will be missed.

LADY NEIGHBOR arrived at a wake and after conveying her condolences to the widow, said: "I never saw that Grandfather Clock before. When did you get it?" The widow said she owned no Grandfather Clock, whereupon the neighbor pointed to an object in one of the corners. The widow looked.

"That's not a Grandfather Clock," she explained. "That's the deceased, bless him. Shure and we stood him on end to make room for the mourners."

VERY GOOD LUCK to the Sunday night Studio showings of the new film society, A-G-E. It's named for its founders, Aldo Maggiorotti, Gerald Pratley and Elwood Glover. Want to join for the season opening on January 15 with *Don Q* and *Son of Zorro*? Send \$5 for single membership or \$8 for double to 448 Davisville Avenue, Toronto 7 . . . *To Stephen York*: As I explained, *Everything Seemed Charming* is not a published book. Thanks for offering to buy one . . . *That last item* makes me bold enough to make a wish. It's that some daring publisher would print a pocket book of selections from here. My title for it: *The Horse With the Gold Tooth*. That phrase is a sucker steer used by touts, who begin a conversation with a stranger by asking if he has ever seen one . . . *Can I ask* two favors of certain people at the New Year? 1. Would switchboard girls stop referring everybody and anybody who calls up for any kind of information to this office automatically? 2. Please, stop taking *Film Weekly* out of its wrapper if it isn't intended for you. Borrow it after the person it is intended for reads it, not before. So many don't seem to get back to the wrapper or reach the addressee, who calls here and wants to know where his paper is.

ALL-TIME ALL-STAR Mixed Doubles in skating: Stewart Reburn and Sonja Henie. That's how Skippy Baxter, the veteran star of the Hollywood Ice Revue, picked them for Gene Kessler of the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Stew, who skated with Sonja on the road and in Fox' *Second Fiddle*, has been Toronto chief for Crawley Films for eight years . . . *Fine short* short story, *The Seven Happy Gods*, in the current *Collier's* by the one-man writing-photog team for *Weekend*, Jock Carroll . . . *Don Harron's* performance on U.S. Steel's TV show, which he shared with Joan Blondell and Audrey Christie, Fox starlet, got him a flicker of interest from Warners. They're suckers if they don't grab this lad, whose theatrical training can be matched by very few young fellows . . . *Helen of Troy* will get the Hamilton-Buffalo TV boosting that was so effective with *Ulysses*. Jim Nairn couldn't buy Toronto time for *Famous Players* . . . *Lorne Greene* and family will go to Britain, where he'll make 22 more TV plays and accept other engagements until August, when he's due in NY for rehearsals of the play to be produced by Billy Rose, of which the femme lead is Claire Bloom. Eros, the UK distributor, has just stitched two of Greene's TV shorts into a feature now playing theatres.

HERE'S A YARN for my photog friends, those fearless fellows who shoot on sight.

Two still-photogs were talking. "This morning," said one, "I passed through the park and saw a sight that would break your heart. On a bench sat a very old lady, in rags and hungry, but with the proud and patient look on her once-beautiful face of one who had once known wealth, security and love. Yet there she sat—cold, hungry and desperate." He wiped away a tear.

"That's terrible," said his friend. "What did you give her?"

"Well, it was a sunny day," was the answer, "so I gave her f-11 at 1-100."

MOST PEOPLE ARE curious about writers. Why not? Writers are curious persons—in every meaning of the word. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines curious as (1) "eager to learn, inquisitive, prying," (2) "minutely careful, accurate, solicitous, subtle," then explains parenthetically that this definition is a "literary" one, and (3) "stirring curiosity, puzzling, inviting attention, strange, odd."

Most writers are quite conscious of the third meaning. A good many people think of them as fancy bums with intellectual pretensions to whom God, somewhat unfairly, gave a magic talent that enables them to get by without working. To the young writer, challenging the unknown within himself in isolation and near-poverty, this is heartbreaking. The older writer has developed an imperturbability to that attitude that is good for him but provokes his critics even more.

What are writers really like? I'd say that a description of them by Donald Hough, quoted in *The New York Times* some years ago from his book, *Snow Above Town*, published by Horton, will give you a pretty good idea:

"A writer must work alone; he must forego occupational gregariousness with others of his trade. His first job is to reflect something of the life by which he is surrounded and of which he is a part. This eliminates other writers as neighbors; a writer ought to be surrounded by normal people living a normal life, and writers are not normal people and they live a ridiculous life. They do not live, they pose; they walk on a perpetual stage, taking all parts but their own, working up a sort of protective coloring so they can worm their way into circles from which they hope to extract sustenance. . . . So a writer ought to be regarded with suspicion, not because he is a spy, not because he seems to be unemployed, but simply because he is a fake. The blood of an actor runs in his veins; at one moment he is a solid, respectable citizen, going to church, and at the next he is slinking furtive-eyed about the streets, taking the part of a thief. He has an ungovernable impulse to participate in everything he sees; he never is content to observe. Since he will go to any lengths to accomplish this, his friendship ought to be looked at narrowly."

SHEA'S VICTORIA

(Continued from Page 1)

way for a two-floor parking structure on the 91x170-foot property. The same firm recently acquired the old Toronto Transportation Commission loop on Adelaide, near Yonge, on which it will build a 12-storey building and an eight-storey parking garage, the cost of the two structures to be \$4,500,000. The office building will house the Board of Trade, which has a motion picture branch.

President of City Parking Limited is W. B. (Bernie) Herman, who has drive-in interests and is a member of the Variety Club of Toronto.

The Victoria, which had a first and second balcony, was opened in 1910 by the late Jerry Shea, who then closed Shea's on Yonge Street, where he had presented vaudeville since coming from Buffalo to acquire it in 1899. For 15 years before Shea the Yonge Street house was a Musee, the all-embracing Barnum-type theatrical enterprise so popular then. After Shea left it became the Strand, playing movies, burlesque and anything available. During this period the late Leon Schlesinger, originator of Bugs Bunny, was one of the managers. He later worked in Vancouver. His cartoon interests he sold to Warner Bros.

Shea's Victoria, built at a cost of \$300,000, was closed in 1926 when films hurt the two-a-day and Shea concentrated on his Shea's Hippodrome, the four-a-day vaudeville house he had erected on Bay Street, across from the City Hall, in 1914. Shea's Victoria was used for every type of entertainment by those who rented it. Then, in 1949, it returned to something of its former glory. Famous Players refurbished the orchestra and first balcony, as well as installing new projection and stage equipment, at considerable expense for the run of Cecil B. De Mille's Samson and Delilah. It continued the movie policy for quite a while after that, then closed. The house had about 2,000 seats when first opened but only 1,140 were in use when reopened for films.

In 1921 Famous Players, then headed by N. L. Nathanson, entered a pool deal with Shea for his Hippodrome and FP's Regent, forming the Shea Amusement Company for this. In 1921 the Shea Amusement Company, jointly owned but controlled by Shea, undertook the operation of Loew's Uptown and the Victoria. Jack Arthur was moved from the Regent to conduct and produce at the Hippodrome and Vaughan Glaser, occupying the Uptown with his stock company, was moved to the Victoria. About a dozen years ago, following the



RKO Stalwart For Many Years Is Honored

There are few members of the trade and general press that do not owe thanks to Rutgers Neilson, who was with RKO for 30 years until his recent resignation. His departure from the company was marked by a luncheon in his honor attended by 50 guests. Neilson, standing on the right, is being presented with a travelling kit by Robert K. Hawkinson, assistant foreign manager.

Seated on the left is Ann Valladares, Neilson's secretary, and next to her is Perry Lieber, advertising, publicity and exploitation chief. Next to Neilson, seated, is Herbert H. Greenblatt, Western sales manager.

Short Throws

TWENTY-FIVE years in the theatre business by Frank Colameco, general manager of Timmins Theatres Limited, was marked by associates of the Masciola Enterprises Limited with a banquet in his honor. He was presented with a silver tray.

INTERESTING story from New York is about Miss Jeanne Ansell, who controls a large foreign-language movie circuit. She was convicted with her accountant of defrauding the Federal Government of \$372,000 in theatre admission taxes. They face five years and a \$10,000 fine on each count. A divorcee, the 35-year-old Miss Ansell entered the motion picture business in 1944.

MOTION Picture Association of America and seven members are being sued in a NY Federal Court for \$150,000 by Ellis Films, Inc., which claims that the Association's Production Code ban on

death of Jerry Shea in Toronto, Famous Players acquired control of the Shea Amusement Company and its interests.

Walter Graydon, who was assistant treasurer when the Victoria opened, moved to the Hippodrome and became treasurer there in 1927. Later he managed the Parkdale, Toronto and retired in 1947. Shea's had a Kinetograph projector when it first opened, using it for one-reelers, and it was operated by George Mehl, who organized the projectionists' union in Toronto.

Three Forbidden Stories, its feature, has deprived the company of revenue.

COPYRIGHT on British-made films was extended from 25 years to 50 years by the House of Lords after the matter was presented by Lord Archibald at the urging of producers.

J. ROBERT RUBIN, permanent chairman of the amusement division of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the USA organization, has been named as co-chairman of the industry's 1956 Brotherhood Week effort by William J. Heineman, v-p of United Artists, and Spyros S. Skouras, president of Skouras Theatres. Rubin is with Paramount, as is Gordon Lightstone, who heads the industry committee of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews.

SAM KATZ, co-founder of the Balaban & Katz circuit and a former MGM vice-president, will form a production company with Joseph Pasternak when the latter's contract is up at Metro 15 months from now. Katz, who was one of Stanley Kramer's partners in the Columbia deal that ended a while back, is lining up story properties.

NEXT BOOK by Arthur L. Mayer, writer of Merely Colossal, will be America Goes to the Movies, which is being written in collaboration with Richard Griffith, film curator of the Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.

News Clips

X-ray motion pictures are now practical and growing in use . . . Ten USA film companies lent the Japanese Electric Power Development corporation \$7,500,000 for six years. It's part of a plan that will enable them to get blocked funds out . . . Famous Players last-quarter dividend will be 37½¢ per share . . . David O. Selznick sold nine features for TV use to National Telefilm Associates, Inc. for over \$1,000,000 . . . Montreal French-language TV station, CBFT, will increase its power six-fold next year, thus reaching a far greater area.

Canadian Repertory Theatre of Ottawa has an option on the Glebe, 858-seat nabe house formerly used for movies and occasional concert and vaudeville attractions . . . William Pilkie, Jr. of the Inglewood, Edmonton, was elected president of the Alberta branch of the Canadian Picture Pioneers . . . By 1965 there will be 85,000,000 TV sets in 50,000,000 homes in the USA, it was estimated recently . . . One toy for a less fortunate child was the admission fee at a recent matinee of the Odeon Movie Club in London, Ontario, with Wishing Well Drinks Limited giving free drinks.

Nipawin Theatres Limited of Regina has dropped its idea of building a development that would include a theatre at a cost of \$800,000 on city-owned land that was to be sold for \$12,000. The city withdrew the offer when the company wanted to build apartments instead . . . Foreign film revenue, about half of Hollywood's total, would not be enough to make up for the USA's drop in 1955, Eric Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, said recently . . . Public hearings of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting will start in Ottawa on April 30.

The Will Rogers Memorial Hospital in Saranac Lake, NY, which is headed by Abe Montague of Columbia, will get \$25,900 from the Ford Foundation for additions and improvements and for research. "This should stimulate added interest throughout the amusement world in supporting our Hospital," said Montague. . . . Newsreel companies have protested to the Australian Government against the granting of exclusive rights for the Olympic Games to Associated Rediffusion, a UK firm, in return for \$100,000 . . . Pat Freeman is now general manager of the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies.